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PART 44.

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1872

Vol.  
188 to 191

PRINTED BY

ADVERTISEMENTS are to be sent to ADAMS & FRANCIS, 60, Fleet Street

[LONDON.]

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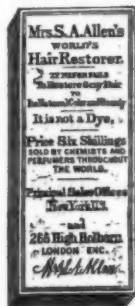
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No. 188. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1872.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

## THE YELLOW FLAG.

By EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "NOBODY'S FORTUNE," &c. &c.

### CHAPTER XII. "WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE."

WHEN Alice first heard the news of Tom Durham's death, she was deeply and seriously grieved. Not that she had seen much of her half-brother at any period of her life, not that there was any special bond of sympathy between them, nor that the shifty, thriftless ne'er-do-well possessed any qualities likely to find much favour with a person of Alice's uprightness and rectitude of conduct. But the girl could not forget the old days when Tom, as a big strong lad, just returned from his first rough introduction to the world, would take her, a little delicate mite, and carry her aloft on his shoulders round the garden, and even deprive himself of the huge pipe and the strong tobacco which he took such pride in smoking, because the smell was offensive to her. She could not forget that whenever he returned from his wanderings, short as his stay in England might be, he made a point of coming to see her, always bringing some little present, some quaint bit of foreign art-manufacture, which he knew would please her fancy, and though his purse was generally meagrely stocked, always asking her whether she was in want of money, and offering to share its contents with her. More vividly than all she recalled to mind his softness of manner and gentleness of tone, on the occasion of their last parting; she recollected how he had clasped her to his breast at the station, and how she had seen the tears falling down his cheeks as the train moved away; she remembered his very words, "I am not

going to be sentimental, it isn't in my line, but I think I like you better than anybody else in the world, though I didn't take to you much at first." And again, "So I love you, and I leave you with regret." Poor Tom, poor dear Tom, such was the theme of Alice's daily reflection, invariably ending in her breaking down and comforting herself with a good cry.

But, in addition to the loss of her brother, Alice Claxton had great cause for anxiety and mental disturbance. John had returned from his last business tour weary, dispirited, and obviously very much out of health. The brightness had faded from his blue eyes, the lines round them and his mouth seemed to have doubled, both in number and depth, his stoop was considerably increased, and instead of his frank, hearty bearing, he crept about, when he thought he was unobserved, with dawdling footsteps, and with an air of lassitude pervading his every movement. He strove his best to disguise his real condition from Alice; he struggled hard to talk to her in his old cheerful way, to take interest in the details of her management of the house and garden, to hear little Bell her lessons, and to play about with the child on days when the weather rendered it possible for him to go into the shrubbery. But even during the time when Alice was talking or reading to him, or when he was romping with the child, he would suddenly subside into a kind of half-dazed state, his eyes staring blankly before him, his hands dropped listlessly by his side; he would not reply until he had been spoken to twice or thrice, and would then look up as though he had either not heard or not understood the question addressed to him. If it was painful to Alice to see her husband in that state, it was far more distressing to



observe his struggles to recover his consciousness, and his attempts at being more like his old self. In his endeavours to talk and laugh, to rally his young wife after his usual fashion, and to comprehend and be interested in the playful babble of the child, there was a ghastly galvanised vivacity most painful to behold.

Watching her husband day by day, with the greatest interest and care, studying him so closely that she was enabled to anticipate his various changes of manner, and almost to foretell the next expression of his face, Alice Claxton became convinced that there was something seriously the matter with him, and it was her duty, whether he wished it or not, to call in medical advice. Mr. Broadbent, the village apothecary, had had a great deal of experience, and was invariably spoken of as a clever, kind-hearted man. When the Claxtons first established themselves at Rose Cottage, the old-fashioned residents in the neighbourhood duly called and left their cards; but after John had consulted with Alice, telling her that he left her to do entirely as she thought fit in the matter, but that for his own part he had no desire to commence a new series of acquaintance, it was agreed between them that it would be sufficient to deliver cards in return, and all further attempts at social intercourse were politely put aside and ignored. In such a village as Hendon was a few years ago, it was, however, impossible without actual rudeness to avoid the acquaintance of the vicar and the doctor, and, consequently, the Reverend Mr. Tomlinson and his wife, and Mr. and Mrs. Broadbent, were on visiting terms at Rose Cottage.

Visiting terms, so far as the Tomlinsons were concerned, meant an interchange of dinners twice in the year; but Mr. Broadbent was seen, by Mrs. Claxton at least, far more frequently. The story of little Bell's adoption had got wind throughout the neighbourhood, and the spinsters and the gushing young ladies, who thought it "so romantic," unable to effect an entrance for themselves into the enchanted bower, anxiously sought information from Mr. Broadbent, who was, as they knew, a privileged person. The apothecary was by no means backward in purveying gossip for the edification of his fair hearers, and his eulogies of Mrs. Claxton's good looks, and his detailed descriptions of little Bell's infantile maladies, were received with much delight at nearly all the tea-tables in the neighbourhood. Whether John Claxton had heard

of this, whether he had taken any personal dislike to Mr. Broadbent, or whether it was merely owing to his natural shyness and reserve, that he absented himself from the room on nearly every occasion of the doctor's visits, Alice could not tell; but such was the case. When they did meet they talked politely, and seemed on the best of terms, but John seemed to take care that their meetings should be as few as possible.

What was to be done? John had now been home three days, and was visibly worse than on his arrival. Alice had spoken to him once or twice, seriously imploring him to tell her what was the matter with him, but had been received the first time with a half-laugh, the second time with a grave frown. He was quite well, he said, quite well, so far as his bodily health was concerned; a little worried, he allowed, business worries, which a woman could not understand, matters connected with the firm which gave him a certain amount of anxiety—nothing more. Alice thought that this was not the whole truth, and that John, in his love for her, and desire to spare her any grief, had made light of what was really serious suffering. The more she thought over it the more anxious and alarmed she became, and at length, when on the fourth morning after John's return, she had peeped into the little library and seen her husband sitting there at the window, not heeding the glorious prospect before him, not heeding the book which lay upon his lap, but lying backwards in his chair, with his hands clasped behind his head, his eyes closed, his complexion a dull sodden red, she determined on at once sending for Mr. Broadbent, without saying a word to John about it. An excuse could easily be found; little Bell had a cold, and was slightly feverish, and the doctor had been sent for to prescribe for her; and though he could see Mr. Claxton and have a talk with him, Alice would take care that John could not suspect that he was the object of Mr. Broadbent's visit.

Mr. Broadbent came, pleasant and chatty at first, imagining he had been sent for to see the little girl in one of the ordinary illnesses of childhood; graver and much less voluble as, on their way up to the nursery, Mrs. Claxton confided to him her real object in requesting his presence. Little Bell duly visited, the conspiring pair came down stairs again, and Alice going first, opened the door and discovered Mr. Claxton in the attitude in which she had last



seen him, fast asleep and breathing heavily. He roused at the noise on their entrance, rubbed his eyes, and lifted himself wearily to his feet, covered with confusion, as soon as he made out that Alice had a companion.

"Well, John," cried Alice with a well-feigned liveliness, "you were asleep, I declare! See, here is Mr. Broadbent come to shake hands with you; he was good enough to come round and look at little Bell, who has a bad cold, poor child, and a little flushing in the skin, which frightened me; but Mr. Broadbent says it's nothing."

"Nothing at all, Mr. Claxton, take my word for it," said the doctor, who had by this time advanced into the room, and by a little skilful manœuvring had got his back to the window, while he had turned John Claxton, whose hand he held, with his face to the light, "nothing at all, the merest nothing; but ladies, as you know, are even frightened at that, particularly where little ones are concerned. Well, Mr. Claxton," continued the doctor, who was a big, jolly man, with a red face and a pair of black, bushy whiskers, and a deep voice, "and how do you find yourself, sir?"

"I am quite well, thank you, doctor," said John Claxton, plucking up and striving to do his best. "I may say quite well."

"Lucky man not to find all your travelling knock you about," said the doctor. "I have known several men—commercial—who say they cannot stand the railway half so well as they used to do the old coaches—shakes them, jars them altogether. By the way, there is renewed talk about our having a railway here. Have you heard anything about it?"

"Not I," said John Claxton, "and I fervently hope it will not come in my time. I am content with old Davis's coach."

"Ah," said the doctor with a laugh, "you must find old Davis's coach rather a contrast to some of the railways you are in the habit of scouring the country in, both in regard to speed and comfort. However, I must be off; glad to see you looking so well. Good morning. Now, Mrs. Claxton," added the doctor, as he shook hands with John, "if you will just come with me, I should like to look at that last prescription I wrote for the little lady upstairs."

No sooner were they in the dining-room, with the door closed behind them, than Alice laid her hand upon the doctor's arm and looked up into his face, pale and eager with anxiety.

"Well," she said, "how does he look? What do you think? Tell me at once."

"It is impossible, my dear Mrs. Claxton," said the good-natured apothecary, looking at her kindly, and speaking in a softened voice; "it is impossible for me to judge of Mr. Claxton's state from a mere cursory glance and casual talk; but I am bound to say, that from what I could observe, I fancy he must be considerably out of health."

"So I thought," said Alice, "so I feared." And her tears fell fast.

"You must not give way, my dear madam," said Mr. Broadbent. "What I say may be entirely unfounded. I am, recollect, only giving you my impression after a conversation with your husband, in which, at your express wish, I refrained from asking him anything about himself."

"If I could manage to persuade him to see you, would you come in this afternoon, or to-morrow morning, Mr. Broadbent?"

"I would, of course, do anything you wished. But as Mr. Claxton has never hitherto done me the honour to consult me professionally, and as it seems to me to be a case the diagnosis of which should be very carefully gone into, I would recommend that he should consult some physician of eminence. Possibly, he knows such an one."

"No," said Alice, "I have never heard him mention any physician since our marriage."

"If that be the case, I would strongly advise you to call in Doctor Haughton. He is a man of the greatest eminence; and, as it happens, I see him every day just now, as we have a regular consultation at the Rookery—you know, the large place on the other side of the village, where poor Mr. Piggott is lying dangerously ill. If you like, I will mention the case to Doctor Haughton, when I see him to-morrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Broadbent, I am deeply obliged to you, but I must speak to John first. I should not like to do anything without his knowledge. I will speak to him this afternoon, and send a note round to you in the evening." And Mr. Broadbent, much graver and much less boisterous than usual, took his departure.

John Claxton remained pretty much in the same dozing kind of state during the day. He came into luncheon, and made an effort to talk cheerfully upon the contents of the newspaper and such like topics, and afterwards he had a romp in the hall with little Bell, the weather being too raw

for the child to go out of doors. But two or three turns at the battledore and shuttlecock, two or three spinings of the big humming-top, two or three hidings behind the great-coats, seemed to be enough for him, and he rang for the nurse to take the child to her room just as the little one was beginning to enter into the sport of the various games. Alice had been in and out through the hall during the pastime, and saw the child go quietly off, bearing her disappointment bravely, and saw her husband turn listlessly into the library, his hands buried in the pockets of his shooting-jacket and his head sunk upon his breast. Poor little Alice! Her life for the last few years had been so bright and so full of sunshine; her whole being was so bound up with that of her kind, thoughtful husband, who had taken her from almost menial drudgery and made her the star and idol of his existence, that when she saw him fighting bravely against the illness which was bearing him down, and ever striving to hide it from her, she could not make head against the trouble, but retired into a corner of her pretty little drawing-room and wept bitterly.

Then when the fit of weeping was over, she roused herself, her brain cleared and her determination renewed. "It is impossible that this can go on," she said to herself; "I have a part and share in John's life now; it belongs to me almost as much as to him, and it is my duty to see that it is not endangered. He will be angry, I know, but I must bear his anger! After what Mr. Broadbent said this morning it is impossible that I can allow matters to remain in their present state without acting upon the advice which he gave me, and be the result what it may I will do so."

The autumn twilight had fallen upon the garden, wrapping it in its dim grey folds, the heavy mists were beginning to rise from the damp earth, and the whole aspect outside was dreary and chilly. But when Alice entered the little library she found John Claxton standing at the window, with his head lying against the pane, and apparently rapt in the contemplation of the cheerless landscape.

"John," she said, creeping close to him, and laying her hand upon his shoulder, "John."

"Yes, dear," he replied, passing his arm round her and drawing her closely to him. "You wondered what had become of me; you came to reproach me for leaving you so long to yourself?"

"No, John, not that," said Alice; "there is nothing in the wide world for which I have to reproach you; there has been nothing since you first made me mistress of your house."

"And of my heart, Alice! don't forget that," said her husband, tenderly; "of my heart!"

"And of your heart," she repeated. "But when you gave me that position you expected me to take with it its responsibilities as well as its happiness, did you not? You did not bring me here to be merely a toy or a plaything—no, I don't mean that exactly. I mean not merely to be something for your petting and your amusement—you meant me to be your wife, John; to share with you your troubles and anxieties, and to have a voice of my own, a very little one, in the regulation of all things in which you were concerned?"

"Certainly, Alice," said her husband. "Have I not shown this?"

"Always before, John, always up to within the last few days. And if you are not doing so now, it is, I know, from no lack of love, but rather out of care and thoughtfulness for me."

"Why, Alice," said John, with a struggle to revive his old playful manner, "what is the matter with you? How grave the little woman is to-night."

"Yes, John, I am grave because I know you are ill, and that you are striving to hide it from me lest I should be alarmed. That is not the way it should be, John; you know we swore to be loyal to each other in sickness as well as in health, and it would be my pride, as well as my duty, to take up my place by you in sickness and be your nurse."

"I want no nurse, little woman," he said, bending tenderly over her. "As I told you this morning, I am quite well; only a little——" And then his brain reeled, and his legs tottered beneath him, and had he not caught hold of the chair standing at his elbow he would have fallen to the ground.

"You are ill, John, there is the proof," Alice cried, after he had seated himself and thrown himself heavily back in the chair. She knelt by his side, bathing his forehead with eau-de-cologne. "You are ill, and must be attended to at once. Now, listen; do you understand me?"

A feeble pressure of her hand intimated assent.

"Well, then, Mr. Broadbent mentioned quite by accident this morning that a cele-

brated London physician, a Doctor Haughton I think he called him, was in the habit of coming up here every day just now to visit Mr. Piggott at the Rookery, and it struck me at the time that it would be a very good plan if we could send round to the Rookery and ask this Doctor Haughton to call in as he was passing and see you."

"No," cried John Claxton, in a loud voice, as he started up in his chair; "no, I forbid you distinctly to do anything of the kind. I will have no strange doctor admitted into this house. Understand, Alice, these are my orders, and I insist on their being obeyed."

"That is quite enough, John," said Alice; "you know that your will is my law, still I hope to make you think better of it for your own sake and for mine."

They said no more about it just then. Alice remained kneeling by her husband, holding his hand in hers, and softly smoothing his hair, and bathing his forehead, until the dinner was announced. The threat of calling in Doctor Haughton seemed to have had an inspiring effect on the invalid. He ate and drank more than he had done on the three previous days, and talked more freely and with greater gaiety. So comparatively lively was he, that Alice began to hope that he had been merely suffering, as he had said, under an accumulation of business worries, and that with a little rest and quiet he would recover his ordinary health and spirits.

Quite late in the evening, as they were sitting together in the library, John began talking to his wife about Tom Durham. He had scarcely touched upon the subject since the news of the unfortunate man's death had arrived in England, and even now he introduced it cautiously and with becoming reverence.

"Of course it was a sad blow," he said, "and just now it seems very hard for you to bear; but don't think I have failed to notice, Alice, how, in your love and care for me, you have set aside your own grief lest the sight of your sorrow should distress me."

"I don't know that I deserve any gratitude for that, John; my care for you is so very much greater than any other feeling which can possibly enter into my mind, that it stands apart and alone, and I cannot measure others by it. And yet I was very fond of poor Tom," she said, pensively.

"It will be a comfort for us to think, not now so much as hereafter, that we did our best to start him in an honest career, and

to give him the chance of achieving a good position," said John Claxton. "He had seen a great many of the ups and downs of life, had poor Tom Durham."

"He was a strange mixture of good and evil," said Alice; "but to me he was always uniformly kind and affectionate. He had a strange regard for me as being, I suppose, something totally different from what he was usually brought in contact with; he took care that I should see nothing but the best and brightest side of him, though of course I knew from others that he was full of faults."

"And you loved him all the same?"

"And yet, as you say, I loved him all the same."

"And nothing you could hear now would alter your opinion of him?"

"No, John, I think—I am sure not. I am a strange being, and this is one of my characteristics, that no fault known at the time or discovered afterwards, could in the slightest degree influence my feelings towards one whom I had really loved."

"You are sure of that, Alice?" said John Claxton, bending down and looking earnestly at her.

"Quite sure," she replied.

"That is one of the sweetest traits in your sweet self," said her husband, kissing her fervently.

The next morning Mr. Claxton's improvement seemed to continue. He was up tolerably early, ate a good breakfast, and talked with all his accustomed spirit. Alice began to think that she had been precipitate in her idea of calling in medical advice, particularly in sending for a stranger like Doctor Haughton, and was glad that John had overruled her in the matter. Later in the morning, the air being tolerably mild, and the sun shining, he went with little Bell into the garden, first walking quietly round the paths, and afterwards, in compliance with the child's request, giving himself up for a romping game at play. It was while engaged in this game that John Claxton felt as though he had suddenly lost his intellect, that everything was whirling round him in wild chaotic disorder, then that he was stricken blind and deaf, then that with one great blow depriving him almost of life, he was smitten to the earth. On the earth he lay, while the child, conceiving this to be a part of the game, ran off with shrieks of delight to some new hiding-place. On the earth he lay, how long he knew not, having only the consciousness, when he came to himself, of

being dazed and stunned, and sore all over, as though he had been severely beaten.

John Claxton knew what this meant. He felt it would be almost impossible any longer to hide the state in which he was from the eager, anxious eyes of his wife. He would make one more attempt, however, so bracing himself together, he managed to proceed with tolerable steadiness towards the house. Alice came out to meet him, beaming with happiness.

"What has become of you, you silly John," she cried. "I have been looking for you everywhere? Bell told me she left you hiding somewhere in the garden, and I have just sent up for my cloak, determined to search for you myself."

"Bell was quite right, dear," said John, slowly and with great effort. "I was hiding, as she said, but, as she did not come to find me, I thought I had better make the best of my way without her."

"Not before you were required, sir. I was waiting for you to give me my monthly cheque. Don't you know that to-day is the twenty-fourth, when I always pay my old pensioners and garden people?"

"Is to-day the twenty-fourth?" asked John Claxton, his face flushing very red, as he fumbled in his pocket for his note-book.

"Certainly, John. Thursday, the twenty-fourth, and—"

"I must go," said John Claxton, hoarsely, after he had found his note-book and looked into it; "I must go to London at once."

"To London, John?"

"Yes, at once; particular appointment with Mr. Calverley for to-day. I cannot think how I have forgotten it; but I must go."

"You are not well enough to go, John—you must not."

"I tell you I must and will!" said John Claxton, fiercely. "I shall come back to-night; or, if I have to go off out of town, I will tell you where to send my portman-teau. Don't be angry, dear. I didn't mean to be cross—I didn't, indeed; but business—most important business."

He spoke thickly and hurriedly, his veins were swollen, and his eyes seemed starting out of his head.

"Won't you wait for Davis's coach, John," said Alice, softly; "it will start in half an hour."

"No, no, let it pick me up on the road; tell Davis to look out for me; a little walk will do me good. Give me my hat and coat; and now God bless you, my darling.

You are not angry with me? Let me hear that before I start."

"I never was angry with you, John. I never could be angry with you so long as I live."

He wound his arms around her and held her to his heart; then with rapid shambling steps he started off down the high road. He walked on and on; he must have gone, he thought, at least two miles; would the coach never come? The excitement which sustained him at first now began to fail him, he felt his legs tottering under him, then, suddenly the blindness and the deafness came on him again, the singing in his ears, the surging in his brain, and he fell by the roadside, helpless and senseless.

The delightfully interesting case of Mr. Piggott, of the Rookery, had brought together Doctor Haughton and Mr. Broadbent, after a separation of many years, and led them to renew the old friendship which had been interrupted since their student days at St. George's. Nature was not doing much for Mr. Piggott, and the case was likely to be pleasantly protracted. So that on this very day Doctor Haughton had asked Mr. Broadbent to come and dine and sleep at his house in Saville-row, where he would meet with some old friends and several distinguished members of the profession, and the pair were rolling easily into town, in Doctor Haughton's carriage, with the black bag, containing Mr. Broadbent's evening dress, carefully placed under the coachman's legs.

What is this? A knot of people gathered by the roadside, all craning forward eagerly, and looking at something on the ground? The coachman's practised eye detects an accident instantly, and he whips up his horses and stops them just abreast of the crowd.

"What is it?" cried the coachman.

"Man in a fit," cried one of the crowd.

"That be blowed," said another; "he won't have any more of such fits as them, I reckon—the man's dead, that's what he is!"

Hearing these words, Mr. Broadbent opened the door and pushed his way among the crowd. Instantly he returned, his face full of horror.

"Good God!" he said to his companion, "who do you think it is? The man—the very man about whom I was speaking to you just now—Claxton!"

Doctor Haughton descended from the carriage in a more leisurely and professional manner, stepped among the people,



who made way for him right and left, knelt by the prostrate body, lifted its arms and applied his fingers to its wrists. Then he shook his head.

"The man is dead," he said; "there can be no doubt about that." And he bent forward to look at the features. Instantly recognising him, he sprang back. "Who did you say this man was?" he said, turning to Mr. Broadbent.

"Claxton—Mr. Claxton, of Rose Cottage."

"Nothing of the sort," said the doctor. "I knew him well; it is Mr. Calverley, of Great Walpole-street."

"My good sir," said Mr. Broadbent, "I knew the man well. I saw him only yesterday."

"And I knew Mr. Calverley well. He was one of Chipchase's patients, and I attended him when Chipchase was out of town. We can soon settle this. Here, you lad, just stand at those horses' heads. Gibson," to his coachman, "get down and come here! Did you ever see that gentleman before?" pointing to the body.

The man bent forward and took a long and solemn stare.

"Certainly, sir," he replied, at length, touching his hat, "Mr. Calverley, sir, of Great Walpole-street. Seen him a score of times!"

"What do you think of that?" said Doctor Haughton, turning to his companion.

"Think!" said Mr. Broadbent, "I will tell you what, I think that Mr. Claxton, of Rose Cottage, and Mr. Calverley, of Great Walpole-street, were one and the same man!"

END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

### A FOGGY SUBJECT.

"WELL, Jones, whereabouts are we now, do you suppose?"

"Pon my word," said Jones, "I don't know."

This was a very unusual admission for Jones, but, under the circumstances, it did not much surprise me. For our little yacht—Jones captain and self mate—had been all night becalmed in a dense fog, which now, as day broke, allowed us a view of no greater range than about a dozen yards on all sides, beyond which the dark grey, oily-looking water seemed to blend with the thick atmosphere.

"All I know," continued Jones, as he finished the mug of coffee which Jim (our

crew) had duly provided for our early refreshment, "all I know is, that we are in the Channel, and probably somewhere between Portland and Beachy Head; but, after drifting about in this way all last night, I defy a fellow to say exactly. I wish we could see a little further—it would be uncommonly awkward to find ourselves under the stem of a steamer, and screws don't give one such good warning as paddle-wheels do."

"I should think you wouldn't be able to hear anything far in such a fog," said I.

"No, and so think most people; but it is a matter upon which scientific men are not agreed. Some say that fog deadens and stifles sound; others maintain that it is actually a good conductor. The fact, I suspect, is, that the same term is used by some to denote fog properly so called, and by others to signify fog, mist, low-lying cloud, or, in short, any similar medium which obscures the air. Now each of these various substances may affect sound in its own peculiar way, and hence perhaps arises the difference of opinion. It seems as if their effect in deadening or altering sound were owing to the fact that their presence in the air destroys its homogeneity (or uniformity of texture), for a non-homogeneous body cannot vibrate regularly in unison as a whole—just as a cracked glass does not ring, because the sonorous vibrations are not transmitted with regularity throughout. This was prettily illustrated by an experiment made by Chladni."

"And who was he, pray?"

"A German philosopher, who distinguished himself in the early part of this century by his writings on acoustics. He found that a glass filled with effervescing champagne would not give a clear ring when struck, but as the effervescence subsided the tone became clearer and clearer, until, when the liquid was quite tranquil, the glass would ring as well as ever; and, on stirring up the wine, so as to reproduce the bubbles, the tone again became dull and dead."

"I see," said I; "when the wine was full of bubbles it was not of a uniform substance throughout. And I suppose the particles of mist or fog in the air act in the same manner. That seems to settle the question as to whether they would deaden a sound."

"Just so," replied Jones; "but still the fact remains that their action in that respect is very little understood, and I think the silence of Doctor Tyndall on the sub-



ject, in his Lectures on Sound, is some evidence of the unsettled state of science in the matter."

"Well, sound or no sound, if a breeze would only spring up, we should soon run in shore, and find out where we are."

"Exactly," was the reply; "but that is one of the aggravations of a fog. As a general rule, when it is foggy, no wind; when it blows, no fog. Mind, I am speaking of true fog, not of mist or low cloud. These are nearly always accompanied by wind blowing generally from the sea towards the land. For instance, during the time when the weather is so thick as to require the use of fog-signals, the strongest winds on our eastern coast are from the eastward, sometimes blowing a gale; and the average wind during the whole time of the fogs is rather more than a moderate breeze, blowing from seaward. On the western coast, in foggy weather, the strongest winds are from the south-west, sometimes blowing a strong gale; the average wind on that coast during fog being about a fresh breeze, and blowing from seaward. Some of the weather must consist of meteorologically true fog, which would occur during calm or very light airs, and if one could tell exactly how much of this true fog there is, so as to strike it out in taking the average force of the wind, of course we should find that the thick weather caused by mist or low cloud is accompanied by a greater average strength of wind than what I mentioned. But you know the signal-men cannot be expected to draw such nice distinctions. All they have to do is to keep an account of the time during which it is found necessary to use their signals; and whether this be owing to true fog, or to mere mist, is of no consequence either to them or to the seamen for whose benefit—What is it?" For just then a sound caught my ear, and I held up a finger in token of attention.

"Did you hear anything just now, Jones?"

"No. Did you?"

"Yes. Hush! Perhaps it may come again."

We listened, but nothing was heard save the lap, lap, of the water under our quarter. The smoke from Jones's pipe curled upwards in a departing thread. He was about to replace it between his teeth, when the sound was repeated—a faint bray as of a trumpet. Jones had his watch out in an instant.

"Don't speak, Smith. I heard it. Wait a bit."

Silence again. Jones laid his pipe gently down, and seemed lost in a brown study. Jim, coming aft for the coffee mugs, was repressed by a stern gesture into a kneeling attitude on the deck. Once more the same sound, but louder. Another pause.

"All right," cried Jones, as the sound returned, this time full and plain, a discordant brazen blast. "All right, Smith; that is St. Catherine's fog-horn; so we're not far from port."

"But how do you know that it is that particular fog-horn?" I asked. "There is another at Dungeness, and though I suppose we can't be so far up Channel as that, still we might be."

"So we might," said Jones; "but the signal at Dungeness sounds for five seconds, and is silent for twenty seconds. The one at St. Catherine's sounds for five seconds, and stops for fifteen seconds. I timed it by my watch, and could have punched Jim's head just now for making that confounded noise with his mugs; he nearly made me miss the signal."

"Did he though? Then if you are right in what you said just now about the wind during fogs or mists, I don't believe much in the use of such signals. Here we are, becalmed, or very nearly so; there's a light air beginning to come up from the southward now, the mainsail is just lifting a bit, and yet the rattling of a couple of mugs is enough to drown the sound. Well, suppose it was blowing fresh, with perhaps a nasty sea on, and everything straining and creaking, the wind whistling through the rigging, and we glad to tie a sou'-wester over our ears to keep the stinging spray from cutting them off—what chance should we have of hearing anything of the signal then? To say nothing of the bustle and anxiety that even *you* would be in if we were going ten or twelve knots nowhere in particular, but certainly on a lee shore. And how about timing the sound, even if you did catch it once in a way? Of course in this present case it doesn't much matter whether we are off the Isle of Wight, or off Dungeness, but there are circumstances in which it would be of the utmost importance to know exactly what part of the coast one was on."

"Yes," said Jones, "that is the weak point about all these fog-signals, they haven't power enough to make themselves heard in thick weather against a strong wind—just exactly when they are most wanted—because that means fog on a lee shore."

By this time a light southerly breeze had sprung up, and the fog rolling away, we found ourselves about a mile to the south-east of St. Catherine's. The fog-horn had ceased to sound, but we could distinguish, in front of the lighthouse and pretty group of dwellings, the white building which contained it. We ran smoothly along the beautiful Undercliff, and in a short time the Periwinkle was snugly anchored at Ventnor.

"Jones," said I, as, after paying due attention to the requirements of the inner and outer man, we lighted our pipes and strolled on the beach, "suppose we walk over and pay a visit to the fog-horn, in return for its friendly call?" Jones agreeing, we walked over accordingly; avoiding the high road by a path nearer the sea, leading through the prettiest part of the Undercliff, and emerging on the road again near Marrables. Leaving Niton and St. Catherine's Down on the right, we presently reached the lighthouse, and applying to the principal light-keeper, were courteously shown over the premises.

After duly inspecting the lighthouse itself, and admiring the marvellous neatness and cleanliness everywhere prevailing, we went through the keeper's garden down to the fog-signal house, a small stuccoed building, with a tall chimney rising in the middle, and our brazen friend the horn protruding its head from the seaward slope of the roof. The building contains an entrance lobby, a room for tools and sundries, a coke store, and the machine-room, the latter being about twenty feet by eighteen, well ventilated and lighted by windows on three sides. Here we found the other end of the fog-horn, which passes through an iron cylinder fixed in the roof, and is attached to pipes communicating with large iron receivers. Two strange-looking machines, each with a heavy fly-wheel and a multiplicity of complicated cranks and rods—suggesting the idea of a steam-engine doubled up with cramp—were, as our guide informed us, Ericsson's caloric engines, for working the pumps which condense the air in the receivers. Only one engine is worked at a time, the other being a spare one, ready for use in case of accident. We were informed, however, that no breakdown had occurred since the machinery was erected in 1868, and that the engines are very simple in their working, and entirely free from risk of explosion. Each is about two and a half horse-power, consumes about twelve pounds of coke per hour, and can

be started to work in about thirty minutes—the latter feature being of importance, as it is necessary that the signal should begin to sound without delay when a fog comes on. The horn itself is of brass, in shape somewhat resembling those of the Russian Horn Band, which in my younger days created a sensation in the musical world. This particular instrument, however, would be scarcely suitable for an orchestra, being nine feet long, two and three-quarter inches in diameter at the small end, and two feet across the mouth; and a very little of its brazen roar would go a long way. The horn stands erect, with its upper end bent and its mouth directed seaward; and the keeper pointed out an ingenious mechanical contrivance by which it is made to turn slowly on its vertical axis, so as to throw its sound over a wide arc of a circle, and thus enable it to be heard by vessels in different positions. This accounted for our having heard it at one time much more plainly than at another, the mouth having, no doubt, been then turned directly towards us, and afterwards in a different direction. We learned that this horn is called after its inventor, an American, Mr. Daboll; but respecting other fog-signals the keeper could give us no information, except that gongs are used on board light-ships, large bells at some lighthouses, and cannon at Flamboro' Head, Lundy Island, and North Stack.

Our recent adventure induced me, on returning to town, to make inquiries upon the subject of fog-signals; and I learned that no fewer than six kinds of instruments are used for the purpose, namely, horns or trumpets, whistles, bells, gongs, guns, and sirens.

Horns were long ago used for signals in fogs; but until machinery was employed to compress the air for sounding them, they were but feeble instruments. In 1844, the late Admiral (then Captain) Tayler invented a machine for this purpose, but it was never adopted in practice. The first one which was actually used as a fog-signal was the invention of the late Mr. Daboll, and was established, in 1851, at Rhode Island, in the United States. The air-pumps were worked by a horse-gin, of which a quaint engraving is to be found in the Report of the United States Lighthouse Board of 1852. The experiment appears to have been successful. Captain Walden, an officer who was appointed by the United States government to report upon it, says that he heard it at a distance

of two miles and a half, in a rough sea, and with a strong wind blowing, not dead against the sound, but across it; and he recommended that similar instruments should be established at various other places on the American coast. In 1863, the invention was introduced into England, and in 1864 an experimental horn was set up at Dungeness by the Trinity House; but, as it was not considered sufficiently powerful for that station, it was replaced in the following year by a larger one, similar to the one we saw at St. Catherine's, the small one being transferred to a light-ship on the Norfolk coast. Another of Daboll's trumpets was put up in 1866, at Cumbræ, in the Firth of Clyde; and, although no larger than the one fixed at Dungeness, it appears to be a more efficient instrument, having been heard from three to five miles at sea, in foggy weather, against a strong breeze. This seems to be the greatest distance attained by the note of any trumpet under similar circumstances; and the signal is highly commended by masters of vessels trading to the Clyde, as indeed it ought to be, since it frequently enables them to steer right for their destination during dense fog.

Daboll's invention has, since its first introduction, been considerably improved upon. It was mentioned before, that we noticed a great variation in the power of the sound as it turned to different points, the horn sending forth only a narrow beam of sound, so to speak. This is a defect, because a sailor who expects to hear the signal at a certain distance off shore may be actually within that distance without hearing it, if the wind be strong and the trumpet not pointing directly towards him. To remedy this, Professor Holmes—well known in connexion with the electric light—has succeeded in constructing a trumpet which throws out a broad beam of sound ninety degrees wide; and, by grouping two or more of such trumpets together, he proposes to diffuse the signal at once over any required arc, the trumpets in this case being stationary. It is found that there are situations in which the trumpet itself can be placed much further out towards the sea than the buildings containing the engines and air-pumps; and one of Daboll's inventions was, to work the valves which transmit the air from the condenser to the trumpet, by means of wires or rods, much in the same manner as railway signals are worked at a distance from the stations. But as wires

are liable to break and rods to bend, and as the force required to work them would consume some of the power of the engine, instead of allowing it to be entirely devoted to the air-pumps, the indefatigable professor devised a plan for making the pressure of the air in the receiver the means of opening and shutting the valves; so that the trumpet may now be placed in any situation with reference to the buildings, and at a considerably greater distance than was formerly possible. The trumpet at Souther Point is about one hundred and twenty yards from the air-pumps, and might, if necessary, be even further removed.

As in the case of fog-horns, so also in that of fog-whistles, it is a noteworthy circumstance that the idea was first suggested here, and first practically applied on the other side of the Atlantic. In 1845, a Select Committee of the House of Commons sat to investigate matters connected with lighthouses and similar works; and the late Mr. Alexander Gordon, a civil engineer distinguished by his application of cast iron to the construction of lighthouse towers, was one of the witnesses examined. In the course of his evidence he suggested that powerful whistles, on the same principle as those of locomotive engines, should be used for coast signals during fog, in combination with reflectors for the purpose of concentrating their sound. He pointed out that a shrill high note penetrates further, and is better heard, than a lower note which may be more powerful when near at hand; and illustrated this by a reference to the great distance at which the chirping of a cricket can be heard. But nothing came of his suggestion until 1850, when Mr. Daboll produced an apparatus for using a large locomotive whistle, sounded by compressed air, for the purpose of a fog-signal; and the United States government, promptly recognising its value, caused one to be erected at Rhode Island. The same machinery served for both the whistle and the trumpet, and official and other reports speak very highly of the efficiency of both instruments. Shortly afterwards a scheme was brought out for sounding a whistle for the same purpose by high pressure steam; and an apparatus on this principle was erected by the New Brunswick government at Partridge Island, in the Bay of Fundy. Its sound is officially stated to have been heard at a distance of five and a half miles, against a heavy gale, and with the sea running high.

The value of both these whistles was so evident, that many similar ones were speedily erected on the American coasts. But the news of their performance seems to have taken a long time in crossing the Atlantic and penetrating to the British brain, for it was not until 1869 that one was established here, and that was by the harbour commissioners at Aberdeen. It is on the same principle as that at Partridge Island, and is said to be of great service.

Some other ingenious schemes for fog-whistles have been suggested. One was for increasing the intensity of the sound by the falling of a heavy weight upon a piston working in a cylinder, so as to drive the air with almost explosive violence into the whistle.

Mr. E. A. Cowper—whose name deserves to be known as that of the unselfish inventor who gave to the world, unpatented, the “maroon” or explosive railway signal—proposed the combination of a powerful steam-whistle with a monster trumpet twenty and even forty feet in length; the consequences of standing close in front of which, while sounding, it is agonising to contemplate, though its far-reaching voice would be welcome music to the mariner. But as these schemes have not been tried in practice, their usefulness can only be judged of theoretically and by analogy.

The idea of bells as a fog-signal has been rendered familiar to most of us by the ballad of *Ralph the Rover*, and their application to the purpose is undeniably ancient. They are used at isolated or “rock” lighthouses, and vary in weight from three to seven hundred-weight. Some of those at lighthouses on shore are even heavier; the one at Start Point weighing upwards of a ton and a half, that at South Stack two tons, while more than one on the Irish coast exceeds even that weight. The sound of a bell, however, possesses but little penetrative power, and can reach to no great distance against a strong wind.

The bells at “rock” lighthouses are suspended by strong brackets from the gallery or stone platform surrounding the lantern, and, according to the height of the tower, are from sixty to one hundred feet above the sea level. Such is the violence of the waves during a storm, that a solid mass of water sometimes runs up the shaft of the tower and clean over the gallery; and, if it should meet with the bell, hanging invitingly mouth downwards, the probability is that the latter would be unable to re-

sist the force of circumstances, and would literally “go with the stream.” On the night of the 30th of January, 1860, there was a fearful storm, which rolled up the great Atlantic waves in mountains, and cast them thundering on the rocks of Scilly. On one of the most exposed of these rocks stands the Bishop lighthouse, a magnificent triumph of engineering skill. Built of granite, with every stone bound firmly to its neighbours by all that cement and joggles and wedges can do, it shook and trembled that night under the tremendous assaults of the sea; while the keepers sat together in awe-struck silence, or spoke only with bated breath. All at once the tower quivered like an aspen, a terrific crash and shock followed, and the men started up with the cry, “There goes the lantern!” But the lantern stood firm, the light shone faithfully throughout the night, and not until daybreak did the light-keepers discover what it was that had given way. When morning came, the bell was no longer in its place, nor was anything seen of it afterwards, save that, when the storm abated, a single fragment was found on the rocks at the foot of the tower.

As bells are not to be had for nothing, and the process of landing and fixing one at a “rock” lighthouse is sometimes a matter of considerable expense and difficulty, it is necessary to hang it where it is least exposed to the waves. As a general rule, this is on the side farthest from the open sea, where it is sheltered by the body of the tower. But this very shelter, while preserving the bell as much as possible from risk of injury, acts also as a screen to cut off its sound to seaward, perhaps in the very direction in which it is required to be heard furthest, so that the remedy is nearly as bad as the disease; a consolatory reflection being, that the bell, wherever suspended, is not of much use, because when a vessel is to leeward of it, she does not generally require its signal, and when she is to windward, with a strong breeze blowing, the sound cannot be heard at any distance sufficiently great to be of practical assistance.

Although the small Daboll horn, transferred from Dungeness to the Newarp light-ship, was not considered sufficiently powerful for its former station, it must be a great improvement upon the gong which it replaced at the latter. Gongs are so naturally connected with the idea of China, that no surprise is felt on learning that those used on board our light-ships are imported from



thence. During foggy weather, one of the keepers beats, or is supposed to beat, the gong, more or less vigorously, as a warning to vessels in the neighbourhood; and, in tolerably calm weather, the signal is probably of service as indicating that a light-ship is somewhere thereabouts. Judging from the effect which the noise of a gong near at hand produces upon my own nerves, I think one's inclination would be to pound away rather gently, and not to overdo the thing. Yet there must be some of the men who either enjoy the noise, or whose zeal for the service outweighs their own discomfort, since the gong is sometimes broken, and sent on shore to be repaired, which is effected by the simple process of cutting out the cracked or broken piece, if not too large, when the gong is considered again fit for service.

The guns used for fog-signals at the three stations on the English coast, are eighteen-pounders. They have a charge of three pounds of powder, and are fired every quarter of an hour. There is great diversity of opinion respecting the efficiency of cannon as a fog-signal, and the evidence as to the distance to which their sound will reach is contradictory and uncertain. The fog-guns being fired at intervals of a quarter of an hour, a vessel running twelve knots with a strong wind dead on shore would travel about three miles in that time, and might be in dangerous proximity to the land before the signal was heard.

The syren, in modern times, has been transformed into a box or cylinder, pierced with holes, and breathing high-pressure steam. She has lost her fatal beauty, but has reformed her evil ways. No longer the cruel foe and terror of the sailor, luring him to destruction, she is now his faithful friend, and sings only to warn him of danger. She inhabits the North American coast, and is much esteemed by those who are acquainted with her.

It remains to mention, that the working expenses of different kinds of fog-signals are found to be as follows, per twenty-four hours of signalling: Daboll's third-class horn (similar to the first one at Dungeness and that at Cumbræ), fourteen shillings and threepence; ditto, second class (St. Catherine's), eighteen shillings and a penny; the steam-whistle at Partridge Island, nineteen shillings and tenpence; ditto at Aberdeen, one pound two shillings and fivepence; guns (on the English coast), nine pounds eight shillings and a penny. All the above rates are exclusive

of wages and repairs, and refer solely to the fuel, powder, oil, and other stores, necessarily consumed in the working of the signals.

Jones, who has just seen what I have written, desires me to add a remark of his own. He says that in a country such as ours, almost all sea-coast, very few parts of which are not occasionally beset with fog, the subject of fog-signals must be of immense importance to shipping. He is surprised to find that so little appears to be known respecting the laws which govern the action of fogs upon sound; and that we are even ignorant as to the distance at which the fog-signals, actually in use on our coasts, can be heard in thick and stormy weather. He thinks that these matters deserve more investigation, and that the expense of a thorough scientific inquiry into the whole subject would be money well laid out; and he is not without hope that, before long, such an investigation will be authorised and entered upon.

In all of which observations I agree with Jones.

#### THE OLD HOME.

THE roof tree stands as ever it stood, the jasmine stars  
the wall,  
The great westeria's purple blooms o'er dark grey gables  
fall,  
The roses that our mother loved, blush 'neath her  
window sill,  
And the clematis our father trained droops, as he taught  
it, still.

The August sunset lights the panes, where we were  
wont to watch,  
Its rays of crimson and of gold on baby brows to catch,  
On the wall where your first nest we found, the grand  
old ivy waves,  
As when we chose a shoot to plant upon our sacred  
graves.

The thrushes that we paused to hear are dead long  
summers gone,  
Yet the sweet rose thicket echoes now to the self-same  
ringing tone,  
The flowers a fuller glory show, and the trees a deepened  
shade,  
Naught else on Nature's face is changed, since here of  
yore we played.

Naught else on Nature's face. Oh, life, can ever seasons  
pass  
And leave our hearts renewed as fair and bright as  
meadow grass!  
Death's icy shadow rests for us, on the home that once  
was ours,  
We see through tears the bairns that sport among our  
childhood's flowers.

The stranger's shadow flits across our old familiar  
floors,  
The stranger's footstep as of right seeks our old open  
doors,  
With a dim sense of loss and wrong, like one from  
death returned,  
We look on all for which for years our faithful fond-  
ness yearned.



Better to keep the fancy sketch of all it used to be,  
Better than blurring by the truth the hues of memory!  
Oh earth has no abiding place, but the mighty word is  
given,  
No cloud, or care, or change will vex the countless homes  
of Heaven!

### CHRONICLES OF LONDON STREETS.

#### ISLINGTON AND THE NEW RIVER (CONCLUDED).

ISLINGTON has for centuries been celebrated for its dairy-farms, and the milk-walks of that district (so conveniently near the New River) are still the chief sources of London milk. It may not be uninteresting to describe the mode of managing cows practised by Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Laycock, the chief cow-keepers in 1811, at a time when hay was selling at ten guineas per load.

The cows kept were short-horned Holder-nesse cattle. At three A.M. each cow had half a bushel of grains. At four they were milked; a bushel of turnips was then given each cow, and very soon afterwards they were given some soft green grassy hay (one truss to ten cows). At eight A.M. they passed into the cow-yard. About twelve they were again stalled up, and fed again with grains. About half-past one the milking recommenced. At three they had more turnips, followed by hay. This mode of feeding continued during the turnip season, from September till May. During the other months the cows were fed with grains, cabbages, tares, and rowen, or after-growth hay. When they were turned out to grass they were kept in the field all night, but even then were fed with grains. Mr. Laycock used to store up in pits as much as ten thousand quarters of grains at one time. Distillers' wash was often mixed with the dry provender, and also potatoes and turnips. The calves were sold at two or three days old, and fetched from twenty-five shillings to thirty-five shillings each. The cows were seldom kept more than three or four years, and were then fattened for the butchers. The average yield of a cow was nine quarts per day, and the milk was sold to the retail dealers at about two shillings and sixpence per eight quarts, which was called a barn gallon. The milk used to be carried to London by Welsh girls and Irish women. They arrived in Islington, even in the depth of winter, at three or four o'clock in the morning, laughing and singing to the music of their rattling pails. The weight they carried on their yokes for miles was between one

hundred and one hundred and thirty pounds. Mr. Laycock kept about five or six hundred cows, seventy or eighty horses, and fifty carts and waggons. He gave as much as two hundred guineas for three cart-horses, and seventy-five pounds for three milch-cows.

Forty or fifty years ago, says Nelson, the local historian, writing in 1811, there were many small grass farms at Islington, one on the site of Elliot's-place, in the Lower-street, another, where Bray's-buildings stand, and a third in Upper-street at Holloway. These, however, were gradually absorbed by the farms of Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Laycock.

The adulteration of milk is an old complaint with Londoners. The milk trade has long been the only one in which no very scrupulous man can engage. It has become, as every one knows, almost impossible now to get pure milk in London at any price. Let us relate an anecdote to show the degradation to which cupidity has brought tradesmen of the present century.

Two friends of ours, both conveyancers, had to conduct the sale of two Islington milk-walks. In the first case the papers were already signed, and the money paid, when the man selling the walk asked the new-comer if he did not wish for thirty pounds more to buy his secret. The honest fellow was indignant, and laughed at the offer. "Oh very well," said the rogue; "as you like. You'll be ruined without it; but do as you choose. You can but try; and when you want it, it's yours for thirty pounds." The man did try; he sold pure milk, but with deplorable results. No one liked it; every one complained of its unusual taste, colour, and effects. His profits became smaller and smaller. In despair, he went to the rogue and bought the receipt. It told him in what way, and in what proportions, to water the milk. The rogue also handed him a small bottle of chemical stuff, rank poison, a drop or two of which was to be stirred into the day's milk, to produce a thickness that might pass for cream. But let us do justice to humanity. The other purchaser was a man of finer mould. He refused to adulterate, and finding it impossible to compete with men whose milk was more than half water, he threw up the farm in disgust.

The Old Pied Bull Inn at Islington is described, in 1811, as a fine relic of the Elizabethan age. It was a tradition in the neighbourhood that this house had been once the residence of Sir Walter

Raleigh. The panes of a window, containing the arms of Sir John Miller, bordered with mermaids, globes, sea-horses, leaves, and parrots, were supposed to have once displayed the arms of Raleigh, of whose voyages the emblems were emblematical. The bunch of green leaves was generally asserted to represent the tobacco-plant that Sir Walter's ships brought from Virginia. The parlour was formerly painted in panel with scripture histories. The chimney-piece contained figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity, surrounded by borders of cherubim, fruit, and foliage. The centre figure, Charity, surmounted by two cupids supporting a crown, with a lion and unicorn couchant beneath, was supposed to be emblematical of Queen Elizabeth. On the ceiling were personifications of the Five Senses, with Latin mottoes in stucco.

At the south-east corner of Cadd's-row formerly stood the Duke's Head public-house, kept by Topham, "the strong man." This athlete, the son of a carpenter, kept a public-house near St. Luke's, but failing there, devoted himself to feats of strength, and became landlord of an inn at Islington. His first public exhibition was pulling against a horse in Moorfields. Doctor Desaguliers saw him roll up a pewter dish with his fingers, bend an iron poker by striking it on his bare arm, snap a rope of two inches circumference, and lift a stone of eight hundred-weight.

In 1741, Topham lifted three hogsheads of water, weighing eighteen hundred and thirty-one pounds, in Coldbath Fields, in commemoration of the taking of Portobello by Admiral Vernon. The admiral and many thousands of spectators were present. Drawings of the feat were engraved at the time. One night, seeing a watchman asleep, Topham carried the old man and his box, and dropped them over the wall of Bunhill Fields burial-ground. Another time, as he was sitting at a public-house window, he snatched half an ox from the back of a butcher who was passing. A third time, for a joke, he pulled down part of a scaffold from a house that was building, and with it half of the front wall. He was often known to break a cocoa-nut on his head, and to pull a cart backwards in spite of the driver whipping the horse forward. One night, when two of his guests quarrelled in his taproom, he seized them like children, and beat their heads together. He could lift two hundred-weight with his little finger. He once broke a rope

that would sustain twenty hundred-weight, and lifted with his teeth an oak table six feet long, that had a hundred-weight tied to it. He lifted a person, who weighed twenty-seven stone, with one hand. One night, when an ostler was rude to him, Topham took down a kitchen spit from the mantelpiece, and twisted it round the fellow's neck like a handkerchief. Finally, this Samson took a public-house in Hog-lane, Shoreditch, and in 1749, finding his wife unfaithful, he one day stabbed her, then himself, and died soon after of the wounds. His worthless wife recovered.

Doctor Johnson describes going to Islington to see poor Collins, the poet, when his mind was beginning to fail. It was after Collins had returned from France, and had come to Islington, directing his sister to meet him there. "There was then," says the doctor, "nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school." When his friend took it in his hand, out of curiosity, to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, "I have but one book," said Collins, "but that is the best."

The road to Gore's-place, Islington, from Smithfield Bars, was paved in 1380, and yet as late as 1770, travellers in winter were obliged to remain at the Islington inns all night, as the roads were then dangerous. The Angel, the Red Lion, and the Pied Bull, were the great houses for travellers on the northern road. So late as 1740, the Islington roads were pronounced ruinous, and almost impassable for five months together. The road from Paddington to Islington was made in 1756. It was advocated by the Duke of Grafton, and opposed by the Duke of Bedford, who thought it would approach too near his house.

The City-road was opened in 1761. It was projected by Charles Dingley, Esq., the same man who tried unsuccessfully to introduce the sawmill into England. In the Act of Parliament it was entitled "a road leading from the north-east side of the Goswell-street-road, over the fields and grounds to Old-street-road, opposite the Dog House Bar, and at and from the Dog House Bar to the end of Chiswell-street, by the Artillery Ground."

The Old Queen's Head, a public-house in Lower-street, mentioned by Nelson in 1811, was said to have been built, or at least patronised, by Sir Walter Raleigh, who

used to come there to "take tobacco;" and as Raleigh obtained a patent for licensing taverns, it is possible that this tradition is not erroneous. There are traditions that Burleigh and the Earl of Essex resided there, and also Queen Elizabeth's saddler.

Nearly opposite the end of Cross-street, in the Lower-street, stood Fisher House, a ladies' school in the year of the Restoration. It was afterwards a madhouse, where Brothers, the pretended prophet, was confined. At the south end of Frog-lane, nearly facing Britannia-row, stood a public-house called Frog Hall, which bore for sign a plough drawn by frogs. In a large room on the first floor of the Old Parr's Head, on the terrace, Upper-street, John Henderson, the celebrated player, used to give his recitations, and there Garrick and John Ireland induced him to go on the stage. Ball's Pond was formerly a spot famous for bull-baiting, and a duck-hunting pond, belonging to a tavern-keeper named Ball.

At a house in Camden-passages, near the west end of Camden-street lived that strange but good man, Alexander Cruden, the compiler of the Concordance to the Bible. He also resided in the Upper-street and Old Paradise-row. Cruden was the son of an Aberdeen merchant, and was born in 1701. After being a private tutor and a corrector of the press, he opened a bookseller's shop under the Royal Exchange. His Concordance not selling, he was obliged to shut up his shop, and, his mind becoming affected, he was sent to a private asylum at Bethnal Green. In 1754, on his release, he insisted on being put in nomination at the election for the City of London. He applied for the honour of knighthood; and went about with a sponge, erasing the "Number Forty-five" on the walls, to show his aversion to John Wilkes, against whom he wrote a pamphlet. Latterly he became corrector of the press to Mr. Woodfall's paper, the Public Advertiser, and devoted much time to reforming the felons in Newgate. His second edition of his invaluable Concordance he dedicated to King George the Third, and presented it to him in person. He died in 1770. One morning, when the servant went to inform him that breakfast was ready, Cruden was found dead on his knees in the posture of prayer. He was buried in a dissenting burial-ground in Deadman's-place, Southwark.

The list of Islington vicars includes George Stonehouse, who, lending his pulpit to Whitfield, caused the death, from

chagrin, of Mr. Scott, the lecturer. Whitfield on one occasion being refused the church, preached a sermon from a tombstone in the churchyard.

The old Islington Church, built about 1483, was pulled down as unsafe in 1781. The new church was built by Mr. Stevenson, under the direction of Mr. Dowbiggin, one of the unsuccessful competitors for Blackfriars Bridge. It cost seven thousand three hundred and forty pounds. In 1787 the spire was repaired by being inclosed in a wicker case, inside which was lashed a ladder. This plan was invented by Sir William Haines, a builder, when the spire of St. Bride's was struck by lightning in 1764, and after his scaffold poles had been carried away by a storm. The vault contains two iron coffins and a gable-roofed one of cedar, which holds the body of a certain Justice Palmer. His object was to defeat the worms, and to allow no other dead man to be placed upon him.

Among curious epitaphs once existing in this churchyard are these eccentric lines:

As Death, once travelling the northern road,  
Stopt in this town some short abode,  
Enquiring where true merit lay,  
H' envied and snatch'd this youth away.

Mr. Herd, a clerk of the Custom House, who was murdered in 1782 in the fields near the Shepherd and Shepherdess, was buried in this church. He was returning from town with a friend, and two servants well armed, when he was attacked by foot-pads armed with cutlasses and fire-arms, one of whom, who was afterwards hanged, shot him with a blunderbuss as he was resisting. Mr. Herd was a friend of Mr. Woodfall, the celebrated parliamentary reporter.

Here also lies buried Sir George Whatton, who was slain in 1607, in a savage duel with James Howard, godson of King James, and eldest son of Lord Blantyre, Lord Treasurer of Scotland. They fought with rapier and dagger at the further end of Islington, and both young men were killed. In April, 1620, Sir John Egerton's son was also killed in a duel at Islington; he is said to have been basely stabbed by his antagonist Edward Morgan, who was himself "sorely hurt."

There is an entry in the Islington register of the burial, in 1808, of Elizabeth Emma Thomas, aged twenty-seven. This young woman was disinterred on suspicion, and a large wire pin found sticking in her heart. It was, however, found that this had been done by her doctor at her own request to

prevent the possibility of her being buried alive.

The Thatched House (a public-house) was formerly a reception-house for the Humane Society. Doctor Hawes, the earliest promoter of this society, was the son of the landlord of Job's House, or the Old Thatched House Tavern, near this spot. The Gentleman's Magazine had for thirty years called the attention of the public to the means of resuscitating persons apparently dead. Their practicability being denied, Doctor Hawes proved their possibility by offering rewards to those who rescued drowning persons, and brought them to the reception-houses. In 1774, Doctor Cogan and Doctor Hawes brought each of them fifteen friends to a meeting at the Chapter Coffee House, and founded the Humane Society. In 1774, Doctor Hawes wrote a pamphlet on the death of Doctor Goldsmith, which he attributed to the maladministration of a popular medicine. He also lectured on suspended animation, and refuted the errors of the Reverend John Wesley's Primitive Physick. In 1793, this good and energetic man was the chief means of saving twelve hundred families of Spitalfields weavers from starvation during a time when cottons had begun to supersede silks. This excellent person died in 1808. There is a tablet to his memory in Islington Church.

The free-school and alms-houses in St. John's-street-road were founded by Dame Alice Owen, who was born at Islington in Queen Mary's reign. Her first husband was a brewer, her second an alderman, her third a justice. She died in the reign of James the First, and there is a monument to her memory in Islington Church. There is a legend about these alms-houses. Lady Owen was one day, when a girl, in the fields where this school now stands, stooping down, learning from a milkmaid how to milk a cow, when an arrow from a careless archer passed through her high-crowned hat. In gratitude for her escape, she declared that if she ever lived to be a woman she would erect some memorial of the event on that very spot of ground.

In 1811 there used to be a grass farm near Pullen's-road, and there were haystacks near the south end of Colebrook-terrace. There was a tradition at Islington (which is also found elsewhere) that Mr. Pullen continually tried to get together one thousand cows, but that one always died, keeping his number down to nine hundred and ninety-nine.

Duval's-lane once contained an old moated house, said to have been the retreat of Claude Duval, the French page, who became a notorious highwayman in Charles the Second's time. The tradition is, however, obviously untrue, as even in an old survey of 1611 the house is called "the Devil's House in Devil-lane." Duval was hanged at Tyburn in 1669, and was buried in the middle aisle of Covent Garden Church, and his funeral was attended by flambeau-bearers and mourners of both sexes. Butler wrote a Pindaric ode on Duval, beginning:

He like a lord o' the manor seized upon  
Whatever happen'd in his way,  
As lawful weft and stray,  
And after, by the custom, kept it as his own.

The cutting of the New River was an event of great importance in the history of Islington. In the reigns of Elizabeth and James many schemes were projected for supplying London with water. The conduits having gradually become totally inadequate to meet the demands of a growing city, Elizabeth granted the citizens liberty to convey a river to London from any part of Middlesex or Hertfordshire, but it was never acted upon. In the third year of James the First another Act was passed, granting similar powers, but this also fell through.

At last Mr. Hugh Middleton, a Welshman, and a goldsmith of London, who had enriched himself by a copper or silver mine in Cardiganshire, persuaded the Common Council, in 1601, to transfer to him the power vested in them by the Act of Parliament obtained at his instigation. He at once set to work, at his own risk and charge, to bring, in four years, the Chadwell and Amwell springs to London by a route thirty-eight miles long. In some places the trench was thirty feet deep, and in others the Boarded River, as it was called, passed over a valley in a great wooden trough, raised on brick piers twenty-three feet high.

The projector, much harassed and impeded by factious and greedy landholders in Middlesex and Herts, was at last obliged to petition the City for another five years, in addition to the original four. But his troubles were not yet over; he had already brought the water as far as Enfield when he became so impoverished that he was obliged to apply to the City to aid him in the great and useful work. On their refusal to re-embark in so hazardous an enterprise, he applied, with more success, to King



James himself, rousing his cupidity by making over to him a moiety of the concern, on his agreeing to pay half the expense of the work. The scheme now went on flowingly, and on the 29th of September, 1613, the water was let into the New River Head at Clerkenwell.

Hugh Middleton's brother (mayor of London), and many aldermen and gentlemen, came to witness the ceremony. Sixty labourers, well apparelled, wearing green Monmouth caps, and carrying spades, shovels, and pickaxes, marched to the sound of drums two or three times round the cistern; then stopped at the mount on which the company stood, and one of them recited a poetical speech beginning:

Long have we labour'd, long desired, and pray'd  
For this great work's perfection, and by th' aid  
Of Heaven and good men's wishes, 'tis at length  
Happily conquer'd by cost, art, and strength.  
And after five yeeres deare expense, in dayes,  
Travail, and paines, besides the infinite ways  
Of malice, envy, false suggestions,  
Able to daunt the spirits of mighty ones  
In wealth and courage, &c. &c.

Then marched by borers, paviors, and bricklayers to represent the six hundred men employed, and the poem concluded thus:

Now for the fruits, then. Flow forth, precious Spring,  
So long and dearly sought for, and now bring  
Comfort to all who love thee; loudly sing,  
And with thy crystal murmurs struck together,  
Wish all thy true well-wishers welcome hither.

At which words the flood-gates flew open, the stream ran gallantly into the cistern, drums and trumpets sounding in a triumphal manner, and a brave peal of chambers (cannon) gave full glory to the entertainment.

It was a considerable time before the New River water came into full use; and for the first nineteen years the annual profit scarcely amounted to twelve shillings a share. The following table of dividends will give the best idea of the improvement of value in this property: 1633, three pounds four shillings and twopence; 1680, one hundred and forty-five pounds one shilling and eightpence; 1720, two hundred and fourteen pounds fifteen shillings and sevenpence; and 1794, four hundred and thirty-one pounds eight shillings and eightpence.

The shares in 1811 were considered worth eleven thousand five hundred pounds, and an adventurer's share has been sold by auction for as much as fourteen thousand pounds.

The great undertaking cost the first projectors half a million sterling. There were originally seventy-two shares, and

thirty-six of these were vested in the projector, whose descendants became impoverished, and were obliged to part with the property. The mother of the last Sir Hugh received a pension of twenty pounds per annum from the Goldsmiths' Company. This last Sir Hugh was a poor man, whose whole employment was drinking ale. He was put to board with a sober farmer at Chigwell, in Essex, and there lived and died, a striking and unhappy contrast to his great ancestor. Other branches of the family were relieved by the New River Company, and a female descendant, even as late as 1808, obtained a small annuity from the Corporation.

The Crown's moiety was re-granted to Sir Hugh Middleton by Charles the First, who seeing the company's affairs look unpromising, accepted instead the yearly rent of five hundred pounds, which is still paid. Sir Hugh, afraid of the courtiers' fingers, had precluded King James from having any share in the management.

The New River has between two and three hundred bridges over it, and upwards of forty sluices. From Highbury it passes to Stoke Newington, and proceeds by a subterranean passage of about two hundred yards in length under the highway to Colebrook-row. It then continues under the City-road to the reservoir near Sadler's Wells. In old times the neighbourhood of the New River Head was much resorted to for bathing, in spite of all the efforts of the magistrates.

At the river head there is a house, built in 1613, and new fronted in 1782, by Robert Mylne, the engineer of the company. The board-room is described in 1812 as a fine wainscoted room, with a portrait of King William in the ceiling, together with the arms of Middleton and Green. Under this room is one of the cisterns. Mr. Robert Mylne, the architect of Blackfriars Bridge, raised a monument to Sir Hugh Middleton on a small island at Amwell. A statue to this great public benefactor has also been raised within the last few years on Islington Green.

There used to be a windmill at the river head to raise the water to the Upper Pond Reservoir in Pentonville. There is no doubt that Sir Hugh Middleton became after all an eminently prosperous man. He died aged seventy-six, leaving large sums to his children, an ample provision for his widow, many bequests to his friends and relatives, annuities to servants, and gifts to the poor. The old Islington tradition, however, is that

he was ruined, turned pavior in a Shropshire village, applied for relief to London citizens almost in vain, and died disregarded.

### SIR DOMINICK'S BARGAIN.

A LEGEND OF DUNORAN.

IN the early autumn of the year 1838, business called me to the south of Ireland. The weather was delightful, the scenery and people were new to me, and sending my luggage on by the mail-coach route in charge of a servant, I hired a serviceable nag at a posting-house, and, full of the curiosity of an explorer, I commenced a leisurely journey of five-and-twenty miles on horseback, by sequestered cross-roads, to my place of destination. By bog and hill, by plain and ruined castle, and many a winding stream, my picturesque road led me.

I had started late, and having made little more than half my journey, I was thinking of making a short halt at the next convenient place, and letting my horse have a rest and a feed, and making some provision also for the comforts of his rider.

It was about four o'clock when the road ascending a gradual steep, found a passage through a rocky gorge between the abrupt termination of a range of mountain to my left and a rocky hill, that rose dark and sudden at my right. Below me lay a little thatched village, under a long line of gigantic beech-trees, through the boughs of which the lowly chimneys sent up their thin turf-smoke. To my left, stretched away for miles, ascending the mountain range I have mentioned, a wild park, through whose sward and ferns the rock broke, time-worn and lichen-stained. This park was studded with straggling wood, which thickened to something like a forest, behind and beyond the little village I was approaching, clothing the irregular ascent of the hillsides with beautiful, and in some places discoloured foliage.

As you descend, the road winds slightly, with the grey park-wall, built of loose stone, and mantled here and there with ivy, at its left, and crosses a shallow ford; and as I approached the village, through breaks in the woodlands, I caught glimpses of the long front of an old ruined house, placed among the trees, about half-way up the picturesque mountain-side.

The solitude and melancholy of this ruin piqued my curiosity. When I had reached the rude thatched public-house, with the

sign of St. Columbkil, with robes, mitre, and crosier displayed over its lintel, having seen to my horse, and made a good meal myself on a rasher and eggs, I began to think again of the wooded park and the ruinous house, and resolved on a ramble of half an hour among its sylvan solitudes.

The name of the place, I found, was Dunoran; and beside the gate a stile admitted to the grounds, through which, with a pensive enjoyment, I began to saunter towards the dilapidated mansion.

A long grass-grown road, with many turns and windings, led up to the old house, under the shadow of the wood.

The road, as it approached the house, skirted the edge of a precipitous glen, clothed with hazel, dwarf-oak, and thorn, and the silent house stood with its wide-open hall-door facing this dark ravine, the further edge of which was crowned with towering forest; and great trees stood about the house and its deserted court-yard and stables.

I walked in and looked about me, through passages overgrown with nettles and weeds; from room to room with ceilings rotted, and here and there a great beam dark and worn, with tendrils of ivy trailing over it. The tall walls with rotten plaster were stained and mouldy, and in some rooms the remains of decayed wainscoting crazily swung to and fro. The almost sashless windows were darkened also with ivy, and about the tall chimneys the jackdaws were wheeling, while from the huge trees that overhung the glen in sombre masses at the other side, the rooks kept up a ceaseless cawing.

As I walked through these melancholy passages—peeping only into some of the rooms, for the flooring was quite gone in the middle, and bowed down toward the centre, and the house was very nearly unroofed, a state of things which made the exploration a little critical—I began to wonder why so grand a house, in the midst of scenery so picturesque, had been permitted to go to decay; I dreamed of the hospitalities of which it had long ago been the rallying place, and I thought what a scene of Redgauntlet revelries it might disclose at midnight.

The great staircase was of oak, which had stood the weather wonderfully, and I sat down upon its steps, musing vaguely on the transitoriness of all things under the sun.

Except for the hoarse and distant clamour of the rooks, hardly audible where I

sat, no sound broke the profound stillness of the spot. Such a sense of solitude I have seldom experienced before. The air was stirless, there was not even the rustle of a withered leaf along the passage. It was oppressive. The tall trees that stood close about the building darkened it, and added something of awe to the melancholy of the scene.

In this mood I heard, with an unpleasant surprise, close to me, a voice that was drawing, and, I fancied, sneering, repeat the words: "Food for worms, dead and rotten; God over all."

There was a small window in the wall, here very thick, which had been built up, and in the dark recess of this, deep in the shadow, I now saw a sharp-featured man, sitting with his feet dangling. His keen eyes were fixed on me, and he was smiling cynically, and before I had well recovered my surprise, he repeated the distich:

"If death was a thing that money could buy,  
The rich they would live, and the poor they would die."

"It was a grand house in its day, sir," he continued, "Dunoran House, and the Sarsfields. Sir Dominick Sarsfield was the last of the old stock. He lost his life not six foot away from where you are sitting."

As he thus spoke he let himself down, with a little jump, on to the ground.

He was a dark-faced, sharp-featured, little hunchback, and had a walking-stick in his hand, with the end of which he pointed to a rusty stain in the plaster of the wall.

"Do you mind that mark, sir?" he asked.

"Yes," I said, standing up, and looking at it, with a curious anticipation of something worth hearing.

"That's about seven or eight foot from the ground, sir, and you'll not guess what it is."

"I dare say not," said I, "unless it is a stain from the weather?"

"'Tis nothing so lucky, sir," he answered, with the same cynical smile and a wag of his head, still pointing at the mark with his stick. "That's a splash of brains and blood. It's there this hundred years; and it will never leave it while the wall stands."

"He was murdered, then?"

"Worse than that, sir," he answered.

"He killed himself, perhaps?"

"Worse than that, itself, this cross between us and harm! I'm older than I look, sir; you wouldn't guess my years."

He became silent, and looked at me, evidently inviting a guess.

"Well, I should guess you to be about five-and-fifty."

He laughed, and took a pinch of snuff, and said:

"I'm that, your honour, and something to the back of it. I was seventy last Candlemas. You would not a' thought that, to look at me."

"Upon my word I should not; I can hardly believe it even now. Still, you don't remember Sir Dominick Sarsfield's death?" I said, glancing up at the ominous stain on the wall.

"No, sir, that was a long while before I was born. But my grandfather was butler here long ago, and many a time I heard tell how Sir Dominick came by his death. There was no masher in the great house ever sinst that happened. But there was two sarvants in care of it, and my aunt was one o' them; and she kep' me here wid her till I was nine year old, and she was lavin' the place to go to Dublin; and from that time it was let to go down. The wind sthript the roof, and the rain rotted the timber, and little by little, in sixty years time, it kem to what you see. But I have a likin' for it still, for the sake of ould times; and I never come this way but I take a look in. I don't think it's many more times I'll be turnin' in to see the ould place, for I'll be undher the sod myself before long."

"You'll outlive younger people," I said. And, quitting that trite subject, I ran on: "I don't wonder that you like this old place; it is a beautiful spot, such noble trees."

"I wish ye seen the glin when the nuts is ripe; they're the sweetest nuts in all Ireland, I think," he rejoined, with a practical sense of the picturesque. "You'd fill your pockets while you'd be lookin' about you."

"These are very fine old woods," I remarked. "I have not seen any in Ireland I thought so beautiful."

"Eiah! your honour, the woods about here is nothing to what they wor. All the mountains along here was wood when my father was a gosssoon, and Murroa Wood was the grandest of them all. All oak mostly, and all cut down as bare as the road. Not one left here that's fit to compare with them. Which way did your honour come hither—from Limerick?"

"No. Killaloe."

"Well, then, you passed the ground where Murroa Wood was in former times. You kem undher Lisnavourra, the steep

knob of a hill about a mile above the village here. 'Twas near that Murroa Wood was, and 'twas there Sir Dominick Sarsfield first met the devil, the Lord between us and harm, and a bad meeting it was for him and his."

I had become interested in the adventure which had occurred in the very scenery which had so greatly attracted me, and my new acquaintance, the little hunchback, was easily entreated to tell me the story, and spoke thus, so soon as we had each resumed his seat:

It was a fine estate when Sir Dominick came into it; and grand doings there was entirely, feasting and fiddling, free quarters for all the pipers in the country round, and a welcome for every one that liked to come. There was wine, by the hogshead, for the quality; and potteen enough to set a town a-fire, and beer and cidher enough to float a navy, for the boys and girls, and the likes o' me. It was kep' up the best part of a month, till the weather broke, and the rain spoilt the sod for the moneen jigs, and the fair of Allybally Killudeen comin' on they wor obliged to give over their divar-sion, and attind to the pigs.

But Sir Dominick was only beginnin' when they wor lavin' off. There was na way of gettin' rid of his money and estates he did not try—what with drinkin', dicin', racin', cards, and all soarts, it was not many years before the estates wor in debt, and Sir Dominick a distressed man. He shewed a bold front to the world as long as he could; and then he sould off his dogs, and most of the horses, and gev out he was going to thravel in France, and the like; and so off with him for awhile; and no one in these parts heard tale or tidings of him for two or three years. Till at last quite unexpected, one night there comes a rapping at the big kitchen window. It was past ten o'clock, and old Connor Hanlon, the butler, my grandfather, was sittin' by the fire alone, warming his shins over it. There was a keen east wind blowing along the mountains that night, and whistling cowl'd enough, through the tops of the trees, and soundin' lonesome through the long chimneys.

(And the story-teller glanced up at the nearest stack visible from his seat.)

So he wasn't quite sure of the knockin' at the window, and up he gets, and sees his master's face.

My grandfather was glad to see him safe, for it was a long time since there was any

news of him; but he was sorry, too, for it was a changed place, and only himself and old Juggy Broadrick in charge of the house, and a man in the stables, and it was a poor thing to see him comin' back to his own like that.

He shook Con by the hand, and says he:

"I came here to say a word to you. I left my horse with Dick in the stable; I may want him again before morning, or I may never want him."

And with that he turns into the big kitchen, and draws a stool, and sits down to take an air of the fire.

"Sit down, Connor, opposite me, and listen to what I tell you, and don't be afear'd to say what you think."

He spoke all the time lookin' into the fire, with his hands stretched over it, and a tired man he looked.

"An' why should I be afear'd, Masther Dominick?" says my grandfather. "Yourself was a good masther to me, and so was your father, rest his soul, before you, and I'll say the truth, and dar' the devil, and more than that, for any Sarsfield of Dunoran, much less yourself, and a good right I'd have."

"It's all over with me, Con," says Sir Dominick.

"Heaven forbid!" says my grandfather.

"'Tis past praying for," says Sir Dominick. "The last guinea's gone; the ould place will follow it. It must be sold, and I'm come here, I don't know why, like a ghost, to have a last look round me, and go off in the dark again."

And with that he tould him to be sure, in case he should hear of his death, to give the oak box, in the closet off his room, to his cousin, Pat Sarsfield, in Dublin, and the sword and pistols his grandfather carried at Aughrim, and two or three thrifling things of the kind.

And says he, "Con, they say if the divil gives you money overnight, you'll find nothing but a bagful of pebbles, and chips, and nutshells, in the morning. If I thought he played fair, I'm in the humour to make a bargain with him to-night."

"Lord forbid!" says my grandfather, standing up, with a start, and crossing himself.

"They say the country's full of men, listin' sogers for the King o' France. If I light on one o' them, I'll not refuse his offer. How contrary things goes! How long is it since me and Captain Waller fought the jewel at New Castle?"

"Six years, Masther Dominick, and ye



broke his thigh with the bullet the first shot."

"I did, Con," says he, "and I wish, instead, he had shot me through the heart. Have you any whisky?"

My grandfather took it out of the buffet, and the mather pours out some into a bowl, and drank it off.

"I'll go out and have a look at my horse," says he, standing up. There was a sort of a stare in his eyes, as he pulled his riding-cloak about him, as if there was something bad in his thoughts.

"Sure, I won't be a minute rinnin' out myself to the stable, and looking after the horse for you myself," says my grandfather.

"I'm not goin' to the stable," says Sir Dominick; "I may as well tell you, for I see you found it out already—I'm goin' across the deer-park; if I come back you'll see me in an hour's time. But, anyhow, you'd better not follow me, for if you do I'll shoot you, and that 'id be a bad ending to our friendship."

And with that he walks down this passage here, and turns the key in the side door at that end of it, and out wid him on the sod into the moonlight and the cowl'd wind; and my grandfather seen him walkin' hard towards the park-wall, and then he comes in and closes the door with a heavy heart.

Sir Dominick stopped to think when he got to the middle of the deer-park, for he had not made up his mind when he left the house, and the whisky did not clear his head, only it gev him courage.

He did not feel the cowl'd wind now, nor fear death, nor think much of anything but the shame and fall of the old family.

And he made up his mind, if no better thought came to him between that and there, so soon as he came to Murroa Wood, he'd hang himself from one of the oak branches with his cravat.

It was a bright moonlight night, there was just a bit of a cloud driving across the moon now and then, but, only for that, as light a'most as day.

Down he goes, right for the wood of Murroa. It seemed to him every step he took was as long as three, and it was no time till he was among the big oak-trees with their roots spreading from one to another, and their branches stretching overhead like the timbers of a naked roof, and the moon shining down through them, and casting their shadows thick and twisted abroad on the ground as black as my shoe.

He was sobering a bit by this time, and he slacked his pace, and he thought 'twould be better to list in the French king's army, and thry what that might do for him, for he knew a man might take his own life any time, but it would puzzle him to take it back again when he liked.

Just as he made up his mind not to make away with himself, what should he hear but a step clinkin' along the dry ground under the trees, and soon he sees a grand gentleman right before him comin' up to meet him.

He was a handsome young man like himself, and he wore a cocked-hat with gold-lace round it, such as officers wears on their coats, and he had on a dress the same as French officers wore in them times.

He stopped opposite Sir Dominick, and he cum to a standstill also.

The two gentlemen took off their hats to one another, and says the stranger:

"I am recruiting, sir," says he, "for my sovereign, and you'll find my money won't turn into pebbles, chips, and nutshells, by to-morrow."

At the same time he pulls out a big purse full of gold.

The minute he set eyes on that gentleman, Sir Dominick had his own opinion of him; and at those words he felt the very hair standing up on his head.

"Don't be afraid," says he, "the money won't burn you. If it proves honest gold, and if it prospers with you, I'm willing to make a bargain. This is the last day of February," says he; "I'll serve you seven years, and at the end of that time you shall serve me, and I'll come for you when the seven years is over, when the clock turns the minute between February and March; and the first of March ye'll come away with me, or never. You'll not find me a bad master, any more than a bad servant. I love my own; and I command all the pleasures and the glory of the world. The bargain dates from this day, and the lease is out at midnight on the last day I told you; and in the year"—he told him the year, it was easy reckoned, but I forget it—"and if you'd rather wait," he says, "for eight months and twenty-eight days, before you sign the writin', you may, if you meet me here. But I can't do a great deal for you in the mean time; and if you don't sign then, all you get from me, up to that time, will vanish away, and you'll be just as you are to-night, and ready to hang yourself on the first tree you meet."

Well, the end of it was, Sir Dominick chose to wait, and he came back to the house with a big bag full of money, as round as your hat a'most.

My grandfather was glad enough, you may be sure, to see the master safe and sound again so soon. Into the kitchen he bangs again, and swings the bag o' money on the table; and he stands up straight, and heaves up his shoulders like a man that has just got shut of a load; and he looks at the bag, and my grandfather looks at him, and from him to it, and back again. Sir Dominick looked as white as a sheet, and says he:

"I don't know, Con, what's in it: it's the heaviest load I ever carried."

He seemed shy of openin' the bag; and he made my grandfather heap up a roaring fire of turf and wood, and then, at last, he opens it, and, sure enough, 'twas stuffed full o' golden guineas, bright and new, as if they were only that minute out o' the Mint.

Sir Dominick made my grandfather sit at his elbow while he counted every guinea in the bag.

When he was done countin', and it wasn't far from daylight when that time came, Sir Dominick made my grandfather swear not to tell a word about it. And a close secret it was for many a day after.

When the eight months and twenty-eight days were pretty near spent and ended, Sir Dominick returned to the house here with a troubled mind, in doubt what was best to be done, and no one alive but my grandfather knew anything about the matter, and he not half what had happened.

As the day drew near, towards the end of October, Sir Dominick grew only more and more troubled in mind.

One time he made up his mind to have no more to say to such things, nor to speak again with the like of them he met with in the wood of Murroa. Then, again, his heart failed him when he thought of his debts, and he not knowing where to turn. Then, only a week before the day, everything began to go wrong with him. One man wrote from London to say that Sir Dominick paid three thousand pounds to the wrong man, and must pay it over again; another demanded a debt he never heard of before; and another, in Dublin, denied the payment of a tundherin' big bill, and Sir Dominick could nowhere find the receipt, and so on, wid fifty other things as bad.

Well, by the time the night of the 28th

of October came round, he was a'most ready to lose his senses with all the demands that was risin' up again him on all sides, and nothing to meet them but the help of the one dhreadful friend he had to depind on at night in the oak-wood down there below.

So there was nothing for it but to go through with the business that was begun already, and about the same hour as he went last, he takes off the little crucifix he wore round his neck, for he was a Catholic, and his gospel, and his bit o' the thrue cross that he had in a locket, for since he took the money from the Evil One he was growin' frightful in himself, and got all he could to guard him from the power of the devil. But to-night, for his life, he daren't take them with him. So he gives them into my grandfather's hands without a word, only he looked as white as a sheet o' paper; and he takes his hat and sword, and telling my grandfather to watch for him, away he goes, to try what would come of it.

It was a fine still night, and the moon—not so bright, though, now as the first time—was shinin' over heath and rock, and down on the lonesome oak-wood below him.

His heart beat thick as he drew near it. There was not a sound, not even the distant bark of a dog from the village behind him. There was not a lonesomer spot in the country round, and if it wasn't for his debts and losses that was drivin' him on half mad, in spite of his fears for his soul and his hopes of paradise, and all his good angel was whisperin' in his ear, he would a' turned back, and sent for his clargy, and made his confession and his penance, and changed his ways, and led a good life, for he was frightened enough to have done a great dale.

Softer and slower he stept as he got, once more, in undher the big branches of the old oak-threes; and when he got in a bit, near where he met with the bad spirit before, he stopped and looked round him, and felt himself, every bit, turning as cowl'd as a dead man, and you may be sure he did not feel much better when he seen the same man steppin' from behind the big tree that was touchin' his elbow a'most.

"You found the money good," says he, "but it was not enough. No matter, you shall have enough and to spare. I'll see after your luck, and I'll give you a hint whenever it can serve you; and any time

you want to see me you have only to come down here, and call my face to mind, and wish me present. You shan't owe a shilling by the end of the year, and you shall never miss the right card, the best throw, and the winning horse. Are you willing?"

The young gentleman's voice almost stuck in his throat, and his hair was rising on his head, but he did get out a word or two to signify that he consented; and with that the Evil One handed him a needle, and bid him give him three drops of blood from his arm; and he took them in the cup of an acorn, and gave him a pen, and bid him write some words that he repeated, and that Sir Dominick did not understand, on two thin slips of parchment. He took one himself, and the other he sunk in Sir Dominick's arm at the place where he drew the blood, and he closed the flesh over it. And that's as true as you're sittin' there!

Well, Sir Dominick went home. He was a frightened man, and well he might be. But in a little time he began to grow aiser in his mind. Anyhow, he got out of debt very quick, and money came tumbling in to make him richer, and everything he took in hand prospered, and he never made a wager, or played a game, but he won; and for all that, there was not a poor man on the estate that was not happier than Sir Dominick.

So he took again to his old ways: for, when the money came back, all came back, and there was hounds and horses, and wine galore, and no end of company, and grand doin's, and divarsion, up here at the great house. And some said Sir Dominick was thinkin' of gettin' married; and more said he wasn't. But, anyhow, there was somethin' throublin' him more than common, and so one night, unknownst to all, away he goes to the lonesome oak-wood. It was something, maybe, my grandfather thought was troublin' him about a beautiful young lady he was jealous of, and mad in love with her. But that was only guess.

Well, when Sir Dominick got into the wood this time, he grew more in dread than ever; and he was on the point of turnin' and lavin' the place, when who should he see, close beside him, but my gentleman, seated on a big stone undher one of the trees. In place of looking the fine young gentleman in goold lace and grand clothes he appeared before, he was now in rags, he looked twice the size he had been, and his face smutted with soot,

and he had a murtherin' big steel hammer, as heavy as a half-hundred, with a handle a yard long, across his knees. It was so dark under the tree, he did not see him quite clear for some time.

He stood up, and he looked awful tall entirely. And what passed between them in that discourse my grandfather never heered. But Sir Dominick was as black as night afterwards, and hadn't a laugh for anything nor a word a'most for any one, and he only grew worse and worse, and darker and darker. And now this thing, whatever it was, used to come to him of its own accord, whether he wanted it or no; sometimes in one shape, and sometimes in another, in lonesome places, and sometimes at his side by night when he'd be ridin' home alone, until at last he lost heart altogether and sent for the priest.

The priest was with him a long time, and when he heered the whole story, he rode off all the way for the bishop, and the bishop came here to the great house next day, and he gev Sir Dominick a good advice. He toul him he must give over dicin', and swearin', and drinkin', and all bad company, and live a vartuous steady life until the seven years' bargain was out, and if the devil didn't come for him the minute afther the stroke of twelve the first mornin' of the month of March, he was safe out of the bargain. There was not more than eight or ten months to run now before the seven years wor out, and he lived all the time according to the bishop's advice, as strict as if he was "in retreat."

Well, you may guess he felt quare enough when the mornin' of the 28th of February came.

The priest came up by appointment, and Sir Dominick and his raverence wor together in the room you see there, and kep' up their prayers together till the clock struck twelve, and a good hour after, and not a sign of a disturbance, nor nothing came near them, and the priest slep' that night in the house in the room next Sir Dominick's, and all went over as comfortable as could be, and they shook hands and kissed like two comrades after winning a battle.

So, now, Sir Dominick thought he might as well have a pleasant evening, after all his fastin' and praying; and he sent round to half a dozen of the neighbouring gentlemen to come and dine with him, and his raverence stayed and dined also, and a roarin' bowl o' punch they had, and no

end o' wine, and the swearin' and dice, and cards, and guineas changing hands, and songs and stories, that wouldn't do any one good to hear, and the good priest slipped away, when he seen the turn things was takin', and it was not far from the stroke of twelve when Sir Dominick, sitting at the head of his table, swears, "this is the best first of March I ever sat down with my friends."

"It ain't the first o' March," says Mr. Hiffernan of Ballyvoreen. He was a scholar, and always kep' an almanack.

"What is it, then?" says Sir Dominick, startin' up, and dhroppin' the ladle into the bowl, and starin' at him as if he had two heads.

"'Tis the twenty-ninth of February, leap year," says he.

And just as they were talkin', the clock strikes twelve; and my grandfather, who was half asleep in a chair by the fire in the hall, openin' his eyes, sees a short square fellow, with a cloak on, and long black hair bushin' out from under his hat, standin' just there where you see the bit o' light shinin' again' the wall.

(My hunchbacked friend pointed with his stick to a little patch of red sunset light that relieved the deepening shadow of the passage.)

"Tell your master," says he, in an awful voice, like the growl of a baist, "that I'm here by appointment, and expect him down-stairs this minute."

Up goes my grandfather, by these very steps you are sittin' on.

"Tell him I can't come down yet," says Sir Dominick, and he turns to the company in the room, and says he, with a cold sweat shinin' on his face, "for God's sake, gentlemen, will any of you jump from the window, and bring the priest here?" One looked at another, and no one knew what to make of it, and in the mean time, up comes my grandfather again, and says he, tremblin', "He says, sir, unless you go down to him, he'll come up to you."

"I don't understand this, gentlemen, I'll see what it means," says Sir Dominick, trying to put a face on it, and walkin' out o' the room like a man through the press-room, with the hangman waitin' for him outside. Down the stairs he comes, and two or three of the gentlemen peeping over the banisters, to see. My grandfather was walking six or eight steps behind him, and he seen the stranger take a stride out to

meet Sir Dominick, and catch him up in his arms, and whirl his head against the wall, and wi' that the hall-doore flies open, and out goes the candles, and the turf and wood-ashes flyin' with the wind out o' the hall-fire, ran in a drift o' sparks along the floore by his feet.

Down runs the gentlemen. Bang goes the hall-doore. Some comes runnin' up, and more runnin' down, with lights. It was all over with Sir Dominick. They lifted up the corpse, and put its shoulders again' the wall; but there was not a gasp left in him. He was cowl'd and stiffenin' already.

Pat Donovan was comin' up to the great house late that night, and after he passed the little brook, that the carriage track up to the house crosses, and about fifty steps to this side of it, his dog, that was by his side, makes a sudden wheel, and springs over the wall, and sets up a yowlin' inside you'd hear a mile away; and that minute two men passed him by in silence, goin' down from the house, one of them short and square, and the other like Sir Dominick in shape, but there was little light under the trees where he was, and they looked only like shadows; and as they passed him by he could not hear the sound of their feet, and he drew back to the wall frightened; and when he got up to the great house, he found all in confusion, and the master's body, with the head smashed to pieces, lying just on *that spot*.

The narrator stood up and indicated with the point of his stick the exact site of the body, and, as I looked, the shadow deepened, the red stain of sunlight vanished from the wall, and the sun had gone down behind the distant hill of New Castle, leaving the haunted scene in the deep grey of darkening twilight.

So I and the story-teller parted, not without good wishes on both sides, and a little "tip," which seemed not unwelcome, from me.

It was dusk and the moon up by the time I reached the village, remounted my nag, and looked my last on the scene of the terrible legend of Dunoran.

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